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The Drama of Parenting— Parenting 401

Ephesians 6:1-4

PowerPoint Presentation: None

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SermonAudio blurb: none

I. Introduction.

- A. It was good to be in Serbia again and I truly appreciate the opportunity to go. It was also good to go with Matt and Mike as they served the students there well.
- B. I also appreciate Bruce's faithful teaching while I was gone. It is always comforting to know that the pulpit was safe and sound.
- C. I only have one week here because the Elders have told me to take a short sabbatical through June. During my absence Matt Miller, Matt Steele and Dr. John Feinberg will be taking my place.
- D. I want to pick up where I left off on the issue of biblical parenting. Today I want to focus on two very important aspects that will help you immensely as you work with your children. The issue of appeals and the issue of respect.
- E. The vast majority of what I am teaching is for those who have children from about 12 years old and down. I will be addressing older children when I get back so those with teens just need to wait a bit.

II. Parenting 301 — The “do’s” of biblical parenting.

- A. Do give the opportunity for appeals.
 - 1. No parent should ever assume that he is always right, or always understands a situation to its fullest. One of the quickest ways that you can create exasperation or anger within your children is by being so rigid that there are never times that you allow your child to give you additional information that may cause you to reverse or modify your previous directive or decision.
 - 2. This process gives your child the knowledge that he always has the opportunity to appeal something that is perceived to be unfair or unreasonable.
 - 3. The appeal process also gives the parents an opportunity to discern the maturation process of their child. They are able to listen to the child's reasoning, argumentation, and delivery to see certain aspects of growth

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that are very important. Examples would be: gentle speech, care with words, or selfish motives.

4. Rules for effective appeals.
 - a. This is best used after the child has learned obedience and is older. Right around 9 or 10 years old you can begin to use this. Any younger and it will often frustrate you and confuse your child.
 - b. It must be made to the parent who is giving the instruction.
 - (1) Do not allow the child to go to the other parent to make the appeal; especially if that parent did not hear the instruction.
 - (2) This is a common ploy by a child and it must be met with swift and certain discipline. The reason for this is that the child is often attempting to play one parent off of the other. This violates the centrality of the marriage relationship.
 - c. It must be done with an attitude of respect.
 - (1) Any time the child responds in a wrong (sinful) manner it must be dealt with.
 - (2) Remember that the heart of the child is the issue in all that you do.
 - (3) The child should be showing an attitude of meekness. This attitude should be present because the child understands that the parent has the right to make the decision and the authority to overrule any appeal.
 - (4) “Why can’t I . . . ?” But Mom . . . “ ”Do I have to . . . ?” Are not respectful appeals; rather, they are challenges to authority and are sin.
 - d. The appeal can only be made once.
 - (1) An appeal is the offering of additional information that the parent may not be aware of and if it had been known may have caused a different decision.
 - (2) It is not a tool for the child to use so that he can delay unpleasant activities.
 - e. The appeal process is a privilege.

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- (1) Do not allow a child to exploit it by appealing anything and everything.
- (2) What if you notice a large amount of appeals? Assuming that you have warned the child of frivolous appeals, if the child's appeal is not based upon sound, clear reasons then he should be disciplined. An alternative is to suspend the appeal process for a period of time, but make certain that you don't just revoke it; use that time as an opportunity to train the child in the area of submission, respect for authority, and consequences of sinful behavior.

f. The child must first obey the parent before making the appeal.

Frank had been working a lot of extra time recently and was concerned that he had not spent much time with his children. As a result he took his three children to the lake to go fishing. Two of the kids stayed near him, but the third, Bob, wandered a distance away and was fishing there. Frank called him to come back over to where the rest of the family was fishing.

Bob told his father he was coming and came immediately over. At this point in time he then asked if he could appeal the request. After agreeing to it, Frank found out that a friend of Bob's had told him that he had caught several fish over at the other spot and that was why he wanted to fish there. Frank then changed his decision and allowed his son to fish at the other place.

This method preserves the respect and obedience that Bob was to show to his father. At the same time, it allows Frank to change a decision that was not based upon all the facts.

5. One problem that can arise from the appeal process is conflicting requirements by the parents to the same child. An example of this would be the father telling his son to mow the lawn after dinner that day. The mother was unaware of this and told the son to clean up the bathroom after dinner (the father was working late that night). Here is the flow of events in this situation.
 - a. The mother gives her directive.
 - b. The son would acknowledge it ("Yes Ma'am") and then ask for an appeal.
 - (1) Note that the son has a choice here. He could just obey his mom without telling her of what his dad had said, thus getting out of a hard job.
 - (2) This should not be allowed. If the father came home and found the lawn un-mowed, he should be investigating why.

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If the son's defense was that his mom told him to do the bathroom but he never told his mom about the earlier directive then he is wrong and should be disciplined.

- c. The mother would grant it or refuse it.
 - d. If she refuses, then she is now responsible to her husband for the lawn not being mowed.
 - (1) If it is granted then she is told that dad wanted him to mow the lawn right after dinner.
 - e. The mother now reconsiders her directive. Regardless of her ultimate decision the responsibility is upon the mother and the son has been obedient.
- B. Do train your child to show respect.
- 1. One of the greatest areas of parenting that needs to be strengthened is usually respect. Little care is given as to how we teach and model for our children biblical respect; yet the Bible is full of exhortations and commandments related to this important subject.
 - 2. Too often the parents are guilty of training their children in unrighteousness with regard to respect. The parent who demands respect from their children, but shows none to other areas is what the Bible calls a hypocrite.
 - a. Fathers can go a long way in helping the situation by not being critical and disrespectful of his wife.
 - (1) There is no reason the husband should feel free to cut down his wife before his children. He is not to look at her in a derisive manner; rather, he should be supportive, defensive, and encouraging to her.
 - (2) "You husbands in the same way, live with your wives in an understanding way, as with someone weaker, since she is a woman; and show her honor as a fellow heir of the grace of life, so that your prayers will not be hindered" (1 Peter 3:7).
 - b. Mothers can do a great service by showing true submission and respect to her husband.
 - (1) Paul says in Ephesians 5:33b, ". . . the wife must see to it that she respects her husband."

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- (2) “For in this way in former times the holy women also, who hoped in God, used to adorn themselves, being submissive to their own husbands; just as Sarah obeyed Abraham, calling him lord, and you have become her children if you do what is right without being frightened by any fear” (1 Peter 3:5-6) Many find these words of Peter very uncomfortable, even offensive, yet any argument is not with Peter, but with the Holy Spirit who inspired the words.
- c. If you are employed, then make certain that you exhibit the proper respect of your employers.
 - (1) Do not allow yourself to come home and complain, gossip, and have a critical spirit regarding your job.
 - (2) “Servants, be submissive to your masters with all respect, not only to those who are good and gentle, but also to those who are unreasonable. For this finds favor, if for the sake of conscience toward God a person bears up under sorrows when suffering unjustly” (1 Peter 2:18-19).
- d. As citizens you need to have care when discussing politics and those who are in the offices.
 - (1) “Honor all people, love the brotherhood, fear God, honor the king.” (1 Peter 2:17).
 - (2) When dealing with elected officials you also have a great teaching opportunity with your children. You are able to remind them that your hope lies not with those in the office, but in the Lord who sovereignly put them there.
3. Respect defined is simply “the attitude of having consideration and high regard for another person. This attitude shows itself outwardly through actions of obedience and overt concern regarding the other person and anything related to him.”
 - a. The desire of the person’s heart who is respectful is to show honor to the other person.
 - b. True respect also carries a sense of fear toward the person. This is most commonly seen in our relationship with God, but also applies to anyone who is in true authority over us. Therefore it is proper and healthy to have your children have a sense of fear, as long as it is out of respect.

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4. The Bible tells us that Christians are light and salt in this world (Matthew 5:13-14). It is interesting to note that the Lord does not tell us to be salt or light, simply that we are those things.
 - a. Our lives are an example to the entire world of the work that Jesus Christ is doing in us.
 - b. The real question is what kind of salt and light are you as a family? It is not enough to just exist, we are to be exhibiting our new life in every area of our existence.
 - c. It is out of this declaration that we want to train up children who are morally, spiritually, and socially excellent. This is where respect comes in.
 - d. Three key principles to live by regarding the training of respect in children.
 - (1) First, as has already been said, you must have this virtue within your own life. If you don't, then begin to cultivate it now.
 - (2) Second, do not assume that they will just develop it on their own. If you do not train them up to your higher standards, then someone else will most assuredly train them down to a lower standard.
 - (3) Third, use everyday occurrences to illustrate both positively and negatively the concept of true respect.
 - (a) If you see a child playing with a toy and being destructive with it, point it out to your child and use it to talk about respecting things.
 - (b) If you see someone speak to another person in a submissive and respectful manner, seize that opportunity to illustrate respect. Quiz the child on how that person handled himself. Could the person have done it better? What was his demeanor? How did he talk to the person? What were the words he used?
 - (c) Make sure you are doing this in an instructive manner. There is no reason to be saying (especially loudly), "look at Suzy, see how she talks to her parents, why don't you act like that?" Keep your

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tone soft and gracious. You are using these opportunities to help support the things you are teaching in your home.

5. Key passages that will apply in this section.
 - a. Romans 12:3
 - b. Romans 12:10
 - c. Romans 12:15-16
 - d. Romans 13:8
 - e. Romans 14:13
 - f. Romans 14:19
 - g. Romans 15:7
 - h. 1 Corinthians 12:22-26
 - i. Galatians 5:13,
 - j. Ephesians 4:1-3
 - k. Ephesians 6:1-2
 - l. Philippians 2:3
 - m. 1 Peter 2:17

III. Conclusion.

- A. As I go away for the next several weeks let this be a time for parents to do a lot of self-examination over the points taught so far in this series.
- B. Develop a list of points to change, develop or strengthen.
- C. Develop a plan of “attack” and then implement it.